

Surára,
Pakidái

/62 cont. /

4. Life Cycle

842 a) Birth control

862 The number of children among both the Surára and the
[63] Pakidái is very small; no woman has more than three at most.
[65] Aside from the high infant mortality rate as a result of the lack of hygiene, however, this is bound up with the fact that the women must observe an interval of at least three years after each birth, as long as a child is fed with mother's milk, which, in the opinion of these Indians, prevents conception to a considerable extent. If a woman nevertheless becomes pregnant, the medicine men know how to prepare an abortive medicine from plant juices. The reason for birth control, I was told, is that if a child were born during the period of restriction, it would not be healthy and able to cope with life, because the mother's body would still be too weak.

843 b) Food taboos during pregnancy

Before the birth the mother must observe many food taboos in order not to harm her child. Her diet then consists primarily of the tender meat of the mutum (Crax sp.), cooked bananas, manioc flat-cakes, and a drink that is made from the nourishing, very oily pupunha fruits. If she were to eat wild-pig meat, for example, the child would be born dead; the meat of the pirarucu (Osteoglossidae, the largest fresh-water fish), which carries inside it the bad breath of the river, would make it blind, and parrot meat would make it cry constantly later on.

844 c) Birth

While giving birth, the woman kneels in front of a tree and embraces the trunk with both arms. The ground has been sprinkled with water beforehand so that it is slimy and soft. Several female members of the tribe assist the woman in labor. After the birth, two women, each with a cotton thread, tie off the umbilical cord, and a third one then bites it off. The father

Surata
Pekida i

/62 cont. / The father

844 of the child later hangs it on the tip of a pupunha palm
[824] (Guilielma speciosa Mart.), which is connected with fertility
[842] magic; he buries the afterbirth in the planting. Two confinements which I was able to observe were very easy and quick.

[142] On the lower part of the children's back I could see in each case the grayish-black spots of pigment, the so-called Mongolian spots.

844 Immediately after birth, the mother with her baby took a
846 bath at the nearby riverbank and then lay down in her hammock for one or two hours. After that, with the baby on her arm, she already went back to her customary occupation.

845 If a complication arises during confinement, the chief, who
[822] is at the same time the witch doctor, is fetched.
[756]

845 In contrast to most other Indian tribes, twins are reared.
847 If there should be triplets, which so far has never occurred, one child would have to be killed, for, as they said, the mother has only two breasts. Deformed children are killed and thrown into the river.

852 There are no birth ceremonies, for up to its third year of
851 life the child belongs to the flesh and blood of its mother and
553 is not given a name before this.

854 d) Infancy and early childhood

853 The infant or young child is not left alone for a moment. When the mother attends to her housework or gathers fruits and berries in the forest, she carries it in a carrying band of tree bast on her left hip, so that she has the right hand free for her work. Even at night it sleeps with her in the hammock. The breast is constantly at its disposal, so that it never /63/ thinks of sucking its finger. This may perhaps also explain why these Indians have such a perfect set of teeth. As soon as the teeth start coming in, the child is given tough meat to chew on, in order to facilitate teething. At the same time the long period of nursing, along with abundant sunshine, prevents rickets. After 3-4 months the baby is given supplementary food in the form of cooked, green mealy bananas (Musa paradisiaca normalis), which are prechewed by the mother, or a porridge made out of manioc flat-cakes.

YANOMAMO WARFARE, SOCIAL ORGANIZATION
AND MARRIAGE ALLIANCES

By Napoleon Alphonse Chagnon

121 The purpose of this analysis is to show that the
large discrepancy (over 50%) between ideal marriage rules
and actual marriage practice among the Yanomamö Indians of
Southern Venezuela is necessitated by the politico-military
milieu within which marriages are contracted. The data
114 covered in this thesis were collected from November 1964
through February 1966 during which time the author lived with
these Indians. Inter-village warfare was chronic while the
field work was conducted. All the data were obtained from
124 the Yanomamö in their language.

162 Census data on five Yanomamö villages are presented
to show that the male/female sex ratio is high. The shortage
• 847 of women, initially caused by female infanticide, is compli-
595 cated further by the practice of polygyny and coitus taboos
834 and is shown to be the basis of both internal and inter-
721 village fighting. Detailed historical data on village move-
182 ments and warfare, collected from native informants and ex-
plified by case materials on specific events that the author
witnessed, are given to demonstrate the correlation of war-
fare to the shortage of women.

* 621 The imbalanced sex ratio is also shown to be the
613 basis of competition between co-residential patrilineal
598 descent groups, and how the members of these ally themselves
562 to other, patrilineal, local descent groups in order to
maximize the number of women to which each group's members
have access. When intra-village feuding over women becomes
particularly intense, larger villages are shown to fragment
into smaller, independent villages whose initial composition
resembles a dual organization of inter-marrying patrilineal
000 descent groups. Genealogical data in both sociological and

[Introductory, R.ii]

*621 is allied to another which can provide it with more military
 *622 assistance and desirable trade goods than the former can
 722 give to the latter, an imbalance in the exchanges of women
 523 will follow. The imbalance will favor the village that, for
 522 reasons of size and of existing military patterns, least
 438 needs the military aid of the other.

*621 The character of Yanomamö warfare is not as inti-
 *622 mately related to village size as might be expected, although,
 722 of course, larger villages are best able to conduct warfare
 724 successfully over a long period of time from one location.
 522 Larger villages are less likely to be forced to abandon their
 location because of raids from smaller groups, whereas
 smaller groups are markedly vulnerable in this respect.
 Nevertheless, no one village is large enough to withstand
 successfully military pressures from a cluster of smaller,
 allied villages, and, therefore, the members of all villages
 seek defensive alliances with their neighbors. Such alli-
 ances are based on the exchange of women.

*621 Other demographic factors, in addition to sheer size
 562 of villages, affect marriage practices. The ratio of males
 162 to females, for example, is high, partly because of the
 522 practice of female infanticide. Moreover, the shortage of
 182 women is compounded by other factors; sexual intercourse is
 [347] prohibited with pregnant women and those who have nursing
 [834] children, and polygyny causes an unequal distribution of the
 [525] available women. It would be difficult to exaggerate the
 consequences for Yanomamö social organization of this single

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CHAPTER II

THE DEMOGRAPHIC BASIS OF WARFARE, POLITICAL ALLIANCE, AND SETTLEMENT DYNAMICS¹

A. The Shortage of Women and Feuding

As outlined in the Introduction, the shortage of women among the Yanomamö has far-reaching consequences in almost every aspect of their social organization. In this chapter I will establish the general functional relationship between this demographic fact and the dynamics of village feuding, village splitting, and village re-location. These phenomena will be discussed in more detail in later chapters, particularly with reference to the kinship system.

• 847 The Yanomamö practice male and female infanticide. There are a number of reasons accounting for this practice.

847 First, young couples do not relish the prospect of a long
854 period of celibacy that pregnancy and lactation taboos impose
853 on them. From the time a woman discovers she is pregnant
[843] until the time she weans her child, she is not allowed to have sexual relations. The time period involved varies from
(TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 55)

[128]¹ The data discussed in this and subsequent chapters
[114] are drawn from the 5 villages, listed in Table 1, in which I spent most of my time. The historical and genealogical relationships of these villages are given later in the text. My generalizations on Yanomamö culture and social organization are applicable to those groups occupying the Upper Orinoco and the Mavaca River basin. (See Map B, next page.)

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834
853 two to three years, as women nurse their children until they are at least two years old. Faced with this prospect, young couples may decide to kill their child, irrespective of its sex.¹

849 Infanticide is effected by a number of techniques. Most commonly, a woman strangles her child with a vine as soon as it is delivered. In other cases the child is allowed to suffocate if it does not begin breathing spontaneously. If the child begins to breathe, the mother may simply abandon it where it is born, or throw it into the jungle. A case of attempted infanticide came to my attention by way of the New Tribes Mission. A woman in one of the villages on the Padamo River threw a new-born daughter into the jungle. The missionary living with the woman's village found the baby and took it into his own home. The woman had either struck the child on the head with an instrument, or the child had hit something when the mother threw it into the jungle, as there was a severe bruise on the side of the baby's face.²

848 In another instance, a husband forced his wife to kill a child because he was certain that he did not sire the

¹Occasionally the woman will arrange to have an abortion when the foetus is in an advanced state of development. The most common practice consists of rupturing the amnion by trauma: a pregnant woman will lie on her back and have someone, usually a female friend or kinswoman, jump on her abdomen. More rarely, she will have her husband rupture the amnion by squeezing her around the abdomen by an arm lock.

²The missionary ultimately adopted the infant and brought her to England when he left Venezuela.

• 847
[518] child: he had scrupulously observed the coitus taboo during lactation—the wife had not.

Most cases of infanticide take place when a couple already has a small child. Sickness takes a heavy toll during the early months of a child's life, and women are reluctant to jeopardize a child that has already survived the first two years. So, they frequently kill the new-born so that their older child will have no competition for milk. Bahimi, a woman of some 30 years, killed a new male baby shortly after I started my fieldwork in Bisassi-tedi. She explained, tearfully, that she did not feel that she could successfully raise the new child because she still had a son that was nursing.

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162 These cases do not, however, explain why there is a consistent bias to kill females rather than males. When I discovered how significantly the sex ratio diverged from the expected value of 1.0 in some villages, I tried to get an explanation from the Ygnomamö. I was surprised to find out that they were ignorant of their own bias in killing children.

[812] What did come to light, however, was the fact that Ygnomamö prefer to have a male baby for their first child and, if it turns out that the first child is a girl, they will frequently kill her. If, however, a couple prefers to have a girl and the first child is a boy, they generally do not kill the boy.¹

[114]
[582] ¹Whatever the reason may be for the preference toward males as eldest children, there is one structural effect that deserves further enquiry. Rose (1960) effectively showed that where males tend to marry females that are younger than them—

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Several kinds of demographic data suggest that the rate of female infanticide is high. Table 1 gives the sex ratios of five Yanomamö villages. The sex ratio for the total population sample (576 individuals) gives a more meaningful estimate of the rate of female infanticide, as there is considerable variation by village in the value of the sex ratio. The excess of males in the total population (8%) gives a first approximation of the frequency of female infanticide. The variation in the sex ratio by the village, on the other hand, expresses the political relationships of the villages to their allies. That is, the distribution of women in these five villages is a function of the military requirements of the particular villages in the marriage alliance network. Thus, the cline in sex ratio from Reyaboböwei-tedi to Bisaasi-tedi (ignoring the Patanowä-tedi, who are not allied to the other groups) reflects a dominance gradient in politico-military requirements of each village. The total sample of 576 individuals must be considered in order to estimate the frequency of female infanticide among the Yanomamö, but the political relationships between the villages must be understood to account for the variation by village of the value

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 59]

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selves, it is highly unlikely that men will marry a FaSiDa, despite the kinship terminology. Rose did not, however, consider the possibility that sibships may have a systematic bias in their composition; if males tend to be older than their sisters considering all sibships, the probability that a FaSiDa is of marriageable age is increased. I specifically questioned the relationship between female infanticide and FaSiDa marriage, and the Yanomamö denied any correlation between the two practices. There can be no doubt, however, that the occurrence of FaSiDa marriage among the Yanomamö is made more probable by female infanticide.

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 849 of the sex ratio, and the distribution of the women among
 162 them.
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* 629 In Chapter 5 I will show how the two Shamatari vil-
 629 lages, Reyabobōwei-tedi and Mōmaribōwei-tedi, participated in
 594 a treacherous feast during which they killed a number of
 726 their kinsmen from Mōwāraoba-tedi. This feast committed the
 361 two Shamatari villages to an alliance with the Bisaasi-tedi
 and Monou-tedi in which the latter two villages were, in a
 political-military sense, less dependent on the support of
 the Shamatari than the Shamatari were on them. The
 Mōmaribōwei-tedi and the Reyabobōwei-tedi represented the
 front of the Shamatari expansion into the unoccupied Navaca
 River area. The territory they abandoned as they expanded
 to the west was subsequently occupied by other Shamatari
 villages, the members of which were historically related to
 them.¹ By participating in the treacherous feast and be-
 coming enemies to their congeners, the two Shamatari villages
 subordinated themselves to the interests of the Monou-tedi
 and the Bisaasi-tedi. Since they formed a buffer between
 the villages of Bisaasi-tedi and Monou-tedi on the one hand,
 and the Shamatari village of Mōwāraoba-tedi on the other,
 they bore the brunt of the raids mounted by the latter in
 * 629 revenge for the treachery. In short, they had only two
 583 dependable allies, the Monou-tedi and the Bisaasi-tedi.
 162 Their dependence on these allies was transformed into an im-
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 * 621

¹See Chapter 5, "The History of Paruritawē-tedi."

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*628 in terms of women ceded to them by the Shamatari, that they
*621 maintain over their Shamatari allies.
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527 The sex ratio data give a rough idea, then, of the
165 extent of female infanticide and, in addition, reflect the
162 political relationships of the villages to each other in
165 terms of the flow of women. Other demographic data, however,
562 suggest that the practice of female infanticide is even higher
583 than the sex ratios alone indicate. Table 2 gives the stated
*847 cause of death of 240 adult individuals. These individuals
*622 are related to the living members of the three villages of
Monou-tedi, Bisaasi-tedi, and Patanow-tedi. It is im-
mediately apparent that more men die in warfare than women,¹
implying that the frequency of female infanticide is sub-
stantially higher than the 8% suggested by sex ratio data.

838 There are several ways the Yanomamö remedy their
883 woman shortage. Young bachelors, for example, practice
sodomy (bei kã bosi kuwemou, bei kã bosi waumou) with each
other. These relationships develop into a 'buddy' system
[572] (lawã) and promote ties of friendship that extend into adult
[839] life. Some of my informants confidentially told me that
particular young men had been known to copulate with dogs in
estrus, but this was regarded with contempt by all who knew
about it. Homosexuality, however, was not considered des-
picable, but it was thought to be infantile. Most of the

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

¹Twenty-two per cent (31/138) of all male deaths were due to warfare, while only 6% (6/102) of female deaths were due to this cause.

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+628 knowing that they would not be raided in return; the Patanowē-tedi simply could not conduct the war on that immense a scale. The participation of these peripheral villages in the war against the Patanowē-tedi conferred three advantages on them. First, the probability was good that they would benefit materially in the raiding by capturing women. Secondly, they demonstrated their solidarity to their allies at little cost or danger to themselves, thereby putting these allies under obligation to reciprocate the favor at a later time. Finally, the peripheral villages were able to demonstrate their ferocity to their neighbors by going to war, although the danger to themselves was almost negligible. In total, about a dozen villages began raiding the Patanowē-tedi in mid 1965, forcing them to abandon their garden before they could establish a new one elsewhere. The Patanowē-tedi had no alternative but to take refuge in the village of their allies, the Ashadowē-tedi. Without the aid of the Ashadowē-tedi, the Patanowē-tedi would have been forced to colonize from their single site and sustain very heavy losses from the incessant raids of their enemies. As the situation turned out, the Patanowē-tedi lost a large number of people in the raiding, despite having this ally, but the losses would have been much heavier without them.

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[847] Summary

[83] The practice of female infanticide leads to a shortage of women. The Yanoamō attempt to overcome the shortage,

162 sexually, by the practices of sodomy, wife sharing, incest,
 562 and permitted affairs. However, two ways in which the problem
 83 is resolved--clandestine affairs within villages and raiding
 162 to abduct women between villages--create political situations
 562 that favor the development of political alliances for the
 583 purposes of defense. Since these involve the transfer of
 * 847 women between the allies, the practice of female infanticide
 721 constitutes a functional component in the marriage alliance
 722 system.
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* 621 The process of village splitting, growing out of feuds
 * 628 over women, results in the establishment of small, militarily
 578 vulnerable villages. The timing of the split is conditioned
 211 by the agricultural requirements of the village on the one
 722 hand, and the nature of its politico-military relationships
 with other villages on the other. The graded system of
 violence permits flexibility in the settlement pattern and
 the precise conditions of a village split. Because the
 Yanoama rely heavily on cultivated foods, alliances may be
 interpreted as an attempt to maximize the chances of survival
 of groups of kinsmen as independent groups; the possibility
 always exists that a given group may be forced by its enemies
 to seek protection and provisions in the village of an ally.

DOING FIELDWORK AMONG THE YANOMAMÖ 15

other men, both of whom discarded her because of her infidelity. Kaobawü had one daughter by her; she is being raised by his brother.

Kaobawü's eldest wife, Bahimi, is about thirty-five years old. She is his first cross-cousin (see Glossary). Bahimi was pregnant when I began my fieldwork, but she killed the new baby, a boy, at birth, explaining tearfully that it would have competed with Aciwari, her nursing son, for milk. Rather than expose Aciwari to the dangers and uncertainty of an early weaning, she killed the new child instead. By Yanomamö standards, she and Kaobawü have a very tranquil household. He only beats her once in a while, and never very hard. She never has affairs with other men.

Kaobawü is quiet, intense, wise, and unobtrusive. He leads more by example than by threats and coercion. He can afford to be this way as he established his reputation

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(897)

(893)
(839)

(822)
(856)

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Fig. 1-4. Kaomachima, Kaobawü's youngest wife, playing with her son, who is holding a tree frog.



IV · SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

 TABLE 3-3
 SEX-RATIO DATA ON SELECTED VILLAGES

	Males	Females	Totals
Upper Bisaasi-teri	37	48	85
Lower Bisaasi-teri	25	26	51
Monou-teri	34	32	66
Reyaboböwei-teri	52	46	98
Mijmariböwei-teri	50	46	96
Patanowä-teri	122	90	212
Aikam-teri and Roko-teri	129	103	232
	449	391	840

Table 3-3 gives sex-ratio data on seven groups of Yānomamö. The first three villages are not truly representative of the population in general, but are included because they have been frequently discussed in the text.

They are not representative because some 15 men from these villages were killed in a single treacherous feast in 1950, a significant fraction of the adult male population. These feasts are not very frequent. The three groups are allied to each other and have been extremely successful at coercing two neighboring Shamatari villages out of women; a surprisingly high proportion of their women come from these allies. As we shall see, they have been successful because of the geographical and historical relationships that characterize the alliance network in this area.

DEMOGRAPHIC BASIS As is apparent, there are more males in the Yānomamö population than females. This demographic fact results from the practice of selectively killing female babies: *female infanticide*. The Yānomamö also practice male infanticide, but because of the preference to have a male as their first child, they unknowingly kill more females than males. The Yānomamö have only three numbers: one, two, and more-than-two. They are, accordingly, poor statisticians. They are quite unaware of the fact that they do kill more female babies, and every time I questioned them about it, they insisted that they killed both kinds—"more-than-two" of both kinds.

A child is killed at birth, irrespective of its sex, if the mother already has a nursing baby. They rationalize the practice by asserting that the new infant would probably die anyway, since its older sibling would drink most of the milk. They are most reluctant to jeopardize the health and safety of a nursing child by weaning it before it is three years old or so, preferring to kill the competitor instead. Kaobawä's wife, Bahimi, killed a newborn male shortly after I began my fieldwork. She later told me, quite tearfully, that it would have taken milk away from Ariwari, Kaobawä's favorite child. Ariwari at the time was over two years old, but Bahimi refused to wean him. Sometimes a child is killed simply because the mother doesn't feel that she can care for it properly and that it would be an inconvenience to have to tend a baby. I once saw a plump, well-fed, young mother eating a large quantity of food that would have been suitable to give to an older infant. Her emaciated, filthy, and nearly starved child—about two years old—kept reaching out for the food. The mother explained that the baby had gotten a bad case of diarrhea some time ago and had stopped eating. As a consequence, her milk dried up. She refused to attempt to feed it other foods because "it did not know how to eat other foods." When

DISCREPANCIES IN THE MARRIAGE PATTERN 75

When

I insisted that she share her food with the child, he ate it ravenously. In short, she was letting the baby die slowly of starvation. I have similar accounts from missionaries who have also witnessed cases such as this.

Male babies are preferred because they will grow up to be warriors and hunters. Most men make known their wishes to have a son—even to the point of insinuating that the wife ought to deliver a male or suffer the consequences. This is always done in a subtle way, usually by displaying signs of anger or resentment at the thought of having a daughter that constantly eats without being potentially an economic asset or guardian of the village. Many women will kill a female baby just to avoid disappointing their husbands. The Yanomamö also practice abortion in a very crude but effective way. The pregnant woman will lie on her back and have a friend jump on her belly to rupture the amnion. Sometimes abortions are effected because the woman does not want to kill the baby after it is born. In other cases a man will order his wife to abort if he suspects that somebody else conceived the child.

Several techniques are used to kill a newborn child. The most common method is to strangle it with a vine so as not to touch it physically. Another common method is to place a stick across the child's neck and stand on both ends of it until it chokes. In some cases the child is not given the stimulus to breathe and is simply abandoned. Finally, some women throw the child against a tree or on the ground and just abandon it without checking to see if it was killed by the injuries sustained. One of the New Tribes Missionaries discovered a female baby in 1964 that had been discarded in this fashion and brought her home with him. The baby's face was badly bruised on one side, but she survived. The missionary subsequently adopted her legally and is raising her in England.

The demographic result of the Yanomamö infanticide practices is that there is a shortage of females.¹³ This shortage of females, however slight, assumes greater proportions for a number of culturally determined reasons. That is, the shortage of women is even greater than statistics alone imply because of the practice of polygyny and because of taboos relating to sexual intercourse.

The village of Patanowä-teri, for example, has 122 males and only 90 females (see Table 3-3). But many (about 25 percent) of the politically important men in the village have two or more wives. Hence, many men have no wives. Polygyny, therefore, increases the women shortage because the available women are distributed unequally.

In addition to this, the Yanomamö have taboos against intercourse when a woman is pregnant or is nursing a child. The taboo is by no means followed to the strict letter, since children are nursed for three years or more—some men sheepishly admit having coitus with a lactating wife. Rerebawä, whose youngest child is about a year old, told me that he recently tried to persuade his wife to make love. He added: "She told me to go take some drugs and chant to my forest spirits; she is still 'stringy' with her vagina." Hence there is considerable concern within the village over the acquisition and possession of

¹³The frequency of female infanticide must be considerably higher than the statistics in Table 3-3 imply, since warfare results in the death of more men than women. This shows up in the age and sex distribution: There are more males in the younger age categories than females because of the infanticide preferences. As the males get older, however, they are more liable to death in warfare, resulting in a fairly even distribution of males and females in the thirty- to forty-year age interval. Finally, there are more old women than old men, also reflecting the higher male mortality due to warfare. I have published more substantial data on Yanomamö demography in Neel and Chagnon, 1968.

DIVISION OF LABOR AND DAILY SOCIAL LIFE • 81

of other villages—such alliances are stabilized by exchanges of women between the partners, a breach of the prescriptive marriage rules. It is for this reason that such a large discrepancy exists between the ideal behavior and the actual practice, as noted in Table 2.¹⁸

Division of Labor and Daily Social Life

The daily activities and general social life are not as circumscribed by rules and regulations as would appear from the foregoing discussion. In fact, one first has the impression that chaos rather than order reigns over the daily activities of the village members.¹⁹ Thus, while ideal rules about behavior definitely exist, individuals have a great deal of freedom to manipulate their behavior in such a way that they are not unduly encumbered by them. Most of the run-of-the-mill activities of daily life are not characterized by inflexible prescriptions regarding proper behavior.

MALE-FEMALE DIVISION There are a number of distinctions based on status differences that are important in daily life. Perhaps the most conspicuous and most important is the distinction between males and females.

Yanomamö society is decidedly masculine. As was discussed earlier, there is a definite preference to have male children, resulting in a higher incidence of female infanticide as opposed to male infanticide. Female children assume duties and responsibilities in the household long before their brothers are obliged to participate in useful domestic tasks. For the most part, little girls are obliged to tend their younger brothers and sisters, although they are also expected to help their mothers in other chores such as cooking, hauling water, and collecting firewood. By the time girls have reached puberty they have already learned that their world is decidedly less attractive than that of their brothers.

As members of local descent groups, girls have almost no voice in the decisions reached by their agnates concerning their marriage. They are largely pawns to be disposed of by their kinsmen, and their wishes are given very little consideration. In many cases, the girl has been promised to a man long before she reaches puberty, and in some cases her husband actually raises her for part of her childhood. In short, they do not participate as equals in the political affairs of the corporate kinship group and seem to inherit most of the duties without enjoying many of the privileges.

Marriage does not enhance the status of the girl, for her duties as wife require her to assume difficult and laborious tasks too menial to be executed by the men. For the most part these include the incessant demands for firewood and drinking water, particularly the former. Women spend several hours each day scouring the neighborhood

¹⁸Reducing kinship usage to the logical extremes to which the Yanomamö take it, there really is no discrepancy between theory and practice, except in the case of incest. When new villages enter into contact for the first time, their respective headmen call each other *sharui* (brother-in-law). The first exchanges between the groups usually involve the children of these men. The children, of course, stand in marriageable relationship to each other because the children of brothers-in-law can, by the prescriptive definitions, marry.

¹⁹Many fieldworkers do not begin to see the patterns of behavior until they have spent months of intensive contact with their subjects. I was convinced, after five or six months, that there were almost no guidelines for behavior. A part of the difficulty resulted from the language barrier. The patterns began to emerge only after about six months, and only then could I begin asking pertinent questions about many features of social organization.